

crime, violence, alienation, drug use and suicide, and our civic fabric is fraying. In fact, not only does the United States lead the world in material wealth, it also leads the industrialized world in rates of murder, violent juvenile crime, abortion, divorce, cocaine consumption, pornography production, and consumption of pornography. These facts have not been lost on the American people—far from it. Poll after poll shows they recognize it.

I draw the attention of the body to some of the polls that have recently come out. Here is one: What poses the greatest threat to the United States? You can look through here: recession at 30-plus percent; decline of moral values, much higher; military, don't know. That was October 30 of last year.

Here is one from May 3 of this year: Where does the country face the most serious problems today? Moral values area, 56 percent; next closest, environment at 12 percent. Fifty-six percent of the public considering that. That was by a different research group than did the last one.

Here is one done by the Princeton Survey Research Group, July 22 of this year: What priority should be given to dealing with the moral breakdown of the United States? Fifty-five percent say top priority should be given.

My only point in showing these polls is that this is something the American public considers important, indeed, vital for us to be considering. We need to address it in this body. This is not to say that all societal changes have been negative. Far from it.

As I noted earlier, there are many causes for hope, even celebration. But there are causes for concern taking place as well. Even where our challenges remain stark, I am personally optimistic. I believe for every problem in America, there is a solution already in place, usually by an individual or family or community with the heart to make it happen.

I hope this task force will encourage the replication of those solutions, but first and foremost, my hope is that by working together we can begin to better understand where we are as a society and where we are headed.

Senator MOYNIHAN, again, made a point that I think is true: You can't change a problem until you can figure out how to measure it. You need to be able to measure to know when you are making progress on what is happening. That is the stage at which we find ourselves. We know something is happening in our society, but we don't know yet how to accurately measure it. We are still struggling with asking the right questions.

My hope and intention is that this task force would begin the important and necessary work of measuring these issues and asking the right questions.

I want to talk about some of the specifics of the task force, what it is and what it isn't.

There have been a lot of rumors spreading around about this. First, this task force will conduct the important business of investigating and analyzing and examining the state of our culture the causes and consequences of our societal difficulties, and possible solutions. It will hold hearings on such topics as civic participation, the state of the family structure, the impact of popular culture on young people, the causes of youth violence, and innovative and effective initiatives that have reduced various social problems that we have.

It will look at these issues in a holistic and a broad manner and—let me emphasize this—a bipartisan manner. It will not hold legislative jurisdiction. It will not report out or mark up legislation. It will not intrude on people's personal lives or seek to impose a set of values on anyone. It aims to achieve a better description of what is going on in our society, not a prescription of morals. It seeks to inform and investigate, rather than to legislate.

I know there were concerns among some of my colleagues about provisions regarding subpoena power. Let me assure all of them, those have been taken out. This endeavor will be a task force of concerned Members working together to get a better sense of the condition of our society. The task force is bipartisan in purpose, process, and structure, as bipartisan as possible. It is composed of eight members: four Republicans, four Democrats. You can't get much more bipartisan than that.

Together, I hope we can take a good look at what is going on in our society, at the state of the cultural environment in which we currently reside. While these are not legislative issues, they are important public issues with profound consequences, both in terms of public policy and in our daily lives.

This is an important task. I look forward to the counsel and support of my colleagues in getting to this important work. We have tried to bend over backwards to work in a bipartisan way to get this moving forward. We are still working to get this pulled together. I hope my colleagues will continue to talk with us about this, about how we can do this and how we can work together to address this very important problem.

#### AMENDMENT NO. 1833, WITHDRAWN

Mr. President, as I stated at the outset, as the Senator from Pennsylvania noted, I realize this will be subjected to a point of order. I wanted to bring it up and discuss it.

With this discussion, I withdraw my amendment at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the amendment is withdrawn.

The amendment (No. 1833) was withdrawn.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BROWNBACK). Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### MAJOR GENERAL BRUCE SCOTT, CHIEF OF ARMY LEGISLATIVE LIAISON

Mr. THURMOND. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to Maj. Gen. Bruce Scott, who will soon depart his position as Chief of Army Legislative Liaison to assume command of the United States Army Security Assistance Command in Alexandria, VA.

I imagine that the impression most people have of someone who is a general is that of an officer who is in charge of troops, such as a person leading an Infantry division. Few realize that there are more generals who are administrators than troop leaders, and probably even fewer realize one of the most critical jobs any general in the United States Army could hold as far as preparing that service to protect the people, borders, and interests of the nation is the position which General Scott has held for the past two years. Though he might not have been wearing BDU's or eating MRE's for the past twenty-four months, General Scott has had the extremely important responsibility of serving as the head of liaison efforts between the Congress and the Army. In that role, he has led the efforts to make sure that our soldiers have the resources they require to accomplish their mission and dominate any battlefield, anytime, anywhere.

General Scott is well qualified to represent the Army to the Legislative Branch. Every position he has held since beginning his Army career in 1968 as a Cadet at the United States Military Academy at West Point has given him a unique insight into what it is like to be a soldier at every level of the service. Thanks to his assignments to Infantry and Armored divisions, he understands what is involved in serving in a combat arms unit; as a result of his service as a Commanding General and Division Engineer, he understands what general officers require to do their jobs; a veteran of the White House Fellows program, he was exposed at an early stage to the relationship between the legislative and executive branches of government, as well as to

the notion of civilian control of the military; and as a former Deputy Director of Strategy, Plans and Policy, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and plans, he has an appreciation of the strategic, or "bigger", picture. All in all, General Scott came to this job with the credentials and experience that was required of him.

During his command as the Chief of Army Legislative Liaison, General Scott put his rich background to work for him and the Army, working hard to represent the interests of the service to the Senate and House of Representatives, as well as working to make sure that the Army was responsive to our requests and interests. Over the past two-years, General Scott helped to shepherd through the Congress major initiatives on Army modernization and digitization. He has been a forceful and effective advocate for the Army's "Force XXI" and its "Force After Next"; and, during my tenure as Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, we worked together to build even stronger ties between the Army and the Senate Armed Services Committee.

I have always believed that hard work will be rewarded, and after what I am certain at times was an agonizing, if not occasionally exasperating, experience of working with Congress, General Scott will soon take the reins of the United States Army Security Assistance Command. This is an important assignment, especially in this day and age when building or re-reinforcing coalitions and friendships with other nations is as important to the security of the United States as maintaining a well equipped, well trained fighting force. In his new job, General Scott will in many ways be carrying out the duties of an ambassador, he will certainly be making an important contribution to the diplomatic efforts of the United States as he will be required to work with approximately 120 different nations and multinational organizations in promoting international security by assuring our allies have access to modern and effective equipment and systems. I have every confidence that he will discharge the duties of his new job with the same ability, dedication, and professionalism as he has done throughout his career, and especially as he did as Chief of Army Legislative Liaison.

I am certain that my colleagues on the Senate Armed Services Committee and throughout the Senate join me in applauding the work of General Scott and in thanking him for his tireless efforts in working with us for the benefit of our Army and soldiers. I look forward to continuing to monitor the career of General Scott, and I predict that he will continue to achieve great things for many years to come.

#### THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Wednesday, September 29, 1999, the Federal debt stood at \$5,645,399,491,050.88 (Five trillion, six hundred forty-five billion, three hundred ninety-nine million, four hundred ninety-one thousand, fifty dollars and eighty-eight cents).

One year ago, September 29, 1998, the Federal debt stood at \$5,523,786,000,000 (Five trillion, five hundred twenty-three billion, seven hundred eighty-six million).

Five years ago, September 29, 1994, the Federal debt stood at \$4,669,823,000,000 (Four trillion, six hundred sixty-nine billion, eight hundred twenty-three million).

Ten years ago, September 29, 1989, the Federal debt stood at \$2,857,431,000,000 (Two trillion, eight hundred fifty-seven billion, four hundred thirty-one million) which reflects a doubling of the debt—an increase of almost \$3 trillion—\$2,787,968,491,050.88 (Two trillion, seven hundred eighty-seven billion, nine hundred sixty-eight million, four hundred ninety-one thousand, fifty dollars and eighty-eight cents) during the past 10 years.

#### MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 11 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 2506. An act to amend title IX of the Public Health Service Act to revise and extend the Agency for Health Care Policy and Research.

H.R. 2559. An act to amend the Federal Crop Insurance Act to strengthen the safety net for agricultural producers by providing greater access to more affordable risk management tools and improved protection from production and income loss, to improve the efficiency and integrity of the Federal crop insurance program, and for other purposes.

At 6:18 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Berry, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 2981. An act to extend energy conservation programs under the Energy Policy and Conservation Act through March 31, 2000.

#### MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and second times by unanimous consent and referred as indicated:

H.R. 2506. An act to amend title IX of the Public Health Service Act to revise and extend the Agency for Health Care Policy and Research; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

H.R. 2559. An act to amend the Federal Crop Insurance Act to strengthen the safety net for agricultural producers by providing

greater access to more affordable risk management tools and improved protection from production and income loss, to improve the efficiency and integrity of the Federal crop insurance program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions was discharged from further consideration of the following measure which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. 1515. A bill to amend the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act, and for other purposes.

#### ENROLLED BILL PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on September 30, 1999, he had presented to the President of the United States, the following enrolled bill:

S. 249. An act to provide funding for the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, to reauthorize the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, and for other purposes.

#### EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, which were referred as indicated:

EC-5459. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Plan for Health Care Services for Gulf War Veterans"; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC-5460. A communication from the Acting Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, transmitting a report relative to the proposed "Air Transportation Improvement Act"; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-5461. A communication from the Secretary, Federal Trade Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the tar, nicotine, and carbon monoxide content of the smoke of domestic cigarettes sold in 1996 and 1997; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-5462. A communication from the Deputy Executive Secretary, Health Care Financing Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Federal Enforcement in Group and Individual Health Insurance Markets (HCFA-2019-IFC)" (RIN0938-AJ48), received September 22, 1999; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-5463. A communication from the Chief, Regulations Division, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Notice—Labeling of Hard Cider; Treasury Decision—Hard Cider: Postponement of Labeling Compliance Date" (RIN1512-AB71), received September 28, 1999; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-5464. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Land and Minerals Management, Minerals Management Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled